domestic requirement when the domestic production is comparitively less. This ensures continuity in export policy without affecting domestic demand which, in case of exigencies, can be met through imports. The import of pulses is allowed on payment of 5% basic customs duty, 0.5% surcharge and 4% special additional duty. The net effect of import duty is 9.72%. There is no export duty on pulses.

Trade Promotion Board

†535. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Trade promotion Board has been constituted by the Government in the Country;

(b) if so, when this Board was constituted last time and what is the total annual expenditure incurred by Government for the functioning of this Board;

(c) whether it is also a fact that this Board plays main role in deciding policy in respect of the export from the country; and

(d) if so, number of total meetings of this Board held during 1998-99 and upto September this year?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The Board of Trade set up to advise the Government on various export promotion measures was last reconstituted on Feb. 5, 1999. No emolument or TA/DA are admissible to the Members of the Board who function in honorary capacity. The expenditure incurred on the functioning of the Board is insignificant and therefore no separate allocation of fund is made for this purpose.

(c) and (d) The following terms of reference have been assigned to the Board:—

(i) To advise the Government on policy measures for preparation and implementation of both short and long term plans for increasing exports in the light of emerging national and international economic scenario.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(ii) To review export performance of various sectors, identify constraints and suggest measures to be taken both by Government and Industry/Trade, consistent with the need to maximise export earnings and to restrict imports,

(iii) To examine the existing institutional framework for exports and to suggest practical measures for reorganisation/ streamlining it with a view to ensuring coordinated and timely decision making.

(iv) To review the policy instruments, package of incentives, procedures for exports and to suggest steps to rationalise and channelise incentives to areas where they are most needed.

After the reconstitution, a meeting of the Board of Trade was held on 18th February, 1999. Consequent to the decision taken in the said meeting, four working groups comprising of members of Board were constituted for examining and analysing certain aspects related to export promotion.

These working groups met several times and submitted specific recommendations. Some of these recommendations were incorporated in the Exim policy amendments announced on 31.3.99.

Exports from NER

536. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps initiated by Government to encourage exports from NER to the neighbouring countries;

(b) the details of the infrastructure facilities developed and proposed to be developed during Ninth Plan to further export activities; and

(c) the action taken so far on salient recommendations made in the 36th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce on development potential of Commerce in NER?